

'Cincinnatus' and 'Apparatchik': The Israeli Case

Alex Mintz

In a famous article published in *World Politics* in the mid-1960s,¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington distinguished between two types of politicians: the 'Soviet-type politician' – the 'Apparatchik', and the 'American type of politician' – the 'Cincinnatus'.

The 'Apparatchik', according to Brzezinski and Huntington, is a political leader 'who has devoted his life to the party... [and for whom] the political career is normally a more than full-time commitment'. 'The successful "Apparatchik" moves up the hierarchy to posts of broader and broader responsibility... while functioning exclusively in a bureaucratic environment... and his power depends upon his position in the party bureaucratic structure. He is the product of the bureaucratization of the party.'²

The 'Cincinnatus' on the other hand 'combines his public career with the simultaneous pursuit of a private career. He lays aside other responsibilities to devote himself... to the public service.'³ An important difference in the composition of the political leadership in the Soviet Union versus the leadership in the United States, according to those authors, concerns the balance between the number of 'Apparatchiki' versus the number of 'Cincinnatusi'

* A. Mintz teaches Public Administration at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The author wishes to thank Professor A. Arian of Tel-Aviv University for his helpful comments on an earlier version of this essay.

¹ Z. Brzezinski and S.P. Huntington, 'Cincinnatus and the Apparatchik', *World Politics*, October 1963: p. 52-78. Also in R.C. Macridis and B.E. Brown (eds.), *Comparative Politics*, Homewood, Ill. 1964, pp. 557-573.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 560-564.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 561-564.

in each government. Such a difference, according to Brzezinski and Huntington, may have important implications for professionalism and expertise in government.

In this essay we shall attempt to apply this typology to the Israeli case. Our *a priori* expectation concerning the composition of the Israeli leadership since 1948 is that a major difference between the governments led by the Labor Party versus governments dominated by *Likud* members concerns the balance between 'Apparatchiki' and 'Cincinnatusi' in each government. Our hypothesis is that the balance in the Labor-led government in the 1948 to 1976 period will tend to tilt towards the 'Apparatchik' type of political leaders while most of the politicians in the *Likud* governments in the 1977-1981 period will tend to resemble the 'Cincinnatus' type of politician. Being able to establish an approximate ratio between these two types of politicians in each government, we will examine the socio-demographic profile of the Israeli 'Apparatchik' and the Israeli 'Cincinnatus', will assess whether the population of the 'Apparatchiki' and the population of the 'Cincinnatusi' are homogeneous or heterogeneous in their socio-demographic background and will discuss the potential impact of differences in the composition of the political leadership in each government on general governmental behavior.

Research Strategy and Major Findings

To establish the accuracy or inaccuracy of the hypothesis concerning the composition of the political elites in Israel, we collected and analyzed historical, occupational and other socio-demographic data on all Israeli cabinet members who served in the Labor governments since 1948, and on all cabinet members who served in the *Likud* governments during the 1977-1981 period.⁴ The total number of ministers in the Labor governments is seventy-seven, while the number of cabinet members who have served in the *Likud* governments since 1977 is twenty-six. It should be understood that the number of cabinet members is representative of only one type of politician in Israel and that, therefore, the results of this empirical study should not be generalized to other types of Israeli politicians, without further investigation.⁵

⁴ Data were collected from *Who's Who in Israel* (Hebrew), Tel Aviv: Bronfman (various issues), and from *Who's Who in the Ninth Knesset* (Hebrew), Jerusalem: 1977.

⁵ Cf. D. Caspi, 'How Representative is the Knesset?' *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, 14 (Winter 1980), pp. 68-81; Y. Azmon, 'Some Aspects of the Israeli Political Elite', in A. Arian (ed.), *The Elections in Israel, 1973*, Jerusalem, Israel: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1975, pp. 41-59; and A. Brichta, 'The Social and Political Characteristics of Members of the Seventh Knesset', in A. Arian (ed.), *The Elections in Israel, 1969*, Jerusalem, Israel: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1972, pp. 109-131.

The major background characteristics analyzed in this study are occupation, years in the party or in the government bureaucracy, age, sex, country of origin, number of years in Israel, place of residence, education, and party affiliation. A breakdown list of all of these variables is provided in the Appendix.

The analysis of occupational characteristics of cabinet members of the Labor-controlled governments since 1948 reveals that most of the Israeli senior politicians in the 1948 to 1977 period reached leadership positions in government primarily through the channels of the party or the governmental bureaucratic organizations. To be more specific, the careers of forty-one out of seventy-seven (or more than half) of all cabinet members in the Labor-led governments since 1948 were primarily political or governmental, while only one third of the ministers in those governments shared political careers with private careers, primarily in such professions as law, academics or journalism. Nine per cent joined the government after retiring from military service (similar to the proportion of politicians in the United States or the Soviet Union who were recruited from the military)⁶ and more than five per cent were rabbis. Thus, it emerges that most of the cabinet members in the Labor-dominated governments have been socialized politically primarily in the party or the government bureaucratic environment and are a product of the party bureaucratization process. What is the 'Apparatchik' to 'Cincinnatus' balance in governments led by the *Likud* and what is the potential impact of differences in background on orientation towards government?

This essay suggests that the political change of 1977 and the emergence of a new, *Likud*-dominated coalition in Israel brought about a shift in the 'Cincinnatus-Apparatchik' balance in the government characterized by more 'Cincinnatusi' and less 'Apparatchiki' in Israel's political leadership. We also found sharp differences in the socio-demographic background of these two groups on the one hand, and homogeneity within each group on the other. We suggest that variations in the balance of the two groups in each government may to some extent explain differences in the political behavior of the Israeli leadership.

Since the 1977 elections, twenty-six cabinet members have served in the two *Likud* governments elected. While six of these (Begin, Dayan, Landau, Burg, Hammer and Weizman) had served before in a Labor government, twenty new members have been nominated since 1977. Some of the six veteran political figures can be classified as 'Apparatchiki' (Weizman and Dayan may be the notable exceptions), but most of the twenty new members can be considered as 'Cincinnatusi'. Specifically,

⁶ Z. Brzezinski and S.P. Huntington, in R.C. Macridis and B.E. Brown (eds.), *Comparative Politics*, op. cit., p. 565.

the data show that at least two thirds of all ministers in *Likud* governments share their extensive political careers with private careers. Thus, while the careers of more than half of the ministers in the Labor governments were primarily political and governmental, this is true of only about one third of the ministers in the *Likud* governments. Extensive political careers versus political careers which interlaced with private careers seem to characterize Labor versus *Likud* government politicians in Israel. The cabinet minister in the Labor government is thus a politician *and* a bureaucrat while his counterpart in the *Likud* government is a politician but (usually) not a bureaucrat. Before evaluating the potential implications of this difference for what Brzezinski and Huntington call professionalism in government, we shall examine the background characteristics of the Labor cabinet ministers and of the *Likud* members.

While it can be shown, on the basis of the data on the characteristics listed above (age, education, country of origin and so on), that there is a major difference between the socio-demographic profile of ministers in the Labor governments versus the *Likud* coalitions, it would also be interesting to see whether a group consisting of all the 'Apparatchiki' cabinet ministers in Israel (from both the Labor and the *Likud* governments) is homogeneous in its socio-demographic profile. One should also examine whether members of a group consisting of all the 'Cincinnatusi' cabinet members in Israel in 1948-1981 share the same background characteristics.

Regarding the general background characteristics of ministers of the Labor versus the *Likud* governments, the data show that there are clear differences: the politician in the Labor government can be characterized as male, over fifty years old, having immigrated to Israel from Eastern Europe prior to 1948, living in a city or in a *kibbutz*, having graduated from high school and in some cases completed academic studies and devoting his career primarily to the party political activity. The *Likud* government politician on the other hand, was likely to have been born in Israel, lived in a major city, completed academic education, was younger than his counterpart in the Labor government when nominated and shares an extensive political career with a private career in law, industry or the army.

More specifically, the data show that two thirds of all cabinet ministers in the Labor governments from 1948 to 1977 immigrated to Israel from Eastern Europe, more than four fifths of them came to Israel prior to 1948, two thirds of the cabinet members were over 50 (more precisely aged between 51 and 60) when nominated to office, one fifth lived in *kibbutzim* (compared with the proportion of the *kibbutzniks* in the total population, i.e., less than five per cent) while three quarters of them live in the cities (less than the proportion of the urban population in the total

population, i.e., eighty-five per cent). Two thirds of the Israeli senior politicians in the Labor governments completed formal or informal academic education. Most of these politicians are members of the Labor movement or the religious parties.

In contrast, however, data on the socio-demographic profile of ministers in *Likud* governments show that out of the twenty new ministers nominated since 1977, two thirds were born in Israel, only ten per cent came to Israel after 1948, only ten per cent do not live in the cities, over forty per cent were under 50 when nominated to the cabinet, at least seventy-five per cent completed academic education and most of these ministers (about three quarters) combined private careers with extensive political careers. It is interesting to note, however, that this trend of incorporating young, Israel-born politicians into Israeli governments began after the Yom Kippur War, when almost half of the thirteen new members of the Labor-led Meir and Rabin governments were born in Israel and were under 50 when first nominated. Are there any background characteristics which are common to ministers in all Israeli governments?

Quite surprisingly, the empirical background data suggest that while there are sharp differences in the socio-demographic profiles between the groups of 'Apparatchiki' cabinet ministers and of 'Cincinnatusi' leaders there is homogeneity of socio-demographic background within each group: eighty-five per cent of all the cabinet members who were classified as 'Apparatchiki' immigrated to Israel from Eastern Europe, ninety per cent of them came to Israel prior to 1948, three quarters were over 50 when nominated, only a few completed formal academic education, and like genuine 'Apparatchiki', they devoted a full career to politics. Similarly, socio-demographic profiles of the 'Cincinnatusi' in Israel, while being sharply different from the profile of the 'Apparatchiki', is nevertheless to a large degree identical to all members of the group.

Specifically, it was found that over four fifths of the 'Cincinnatusi' live in cities, more than ninety per cent of them have completed formal academic education, almost no 'Cincinnatus' has been nominated to government after reaching the age of 60, almost no 'Cincinnatus' came to Israel from Eastern Europe (since most of them were born in Israel) and, as true 'Cincinnatusi', they came to government after pursuing a private career in law, industry or the army. Thus while the balance between the 'Apparatchiki' and 'Cincinnatusi' is about one-to-one in the Labor governments and one-to-more-than-two in the *Likud* governments (see Table 1) and despite the fact that there are notable differences in the socio-demographic profile of Labor versus *Likud* ministers and of 'Apparatchiki' versus 'Cincinnatusi' cabinet ministers, members of each of these groups share common socio-demographic characteristics regardless of the

government in which they served. The balance of 'Apparatchiki' to 'Cincinnatusi' in each government may be an important factor in explaining Labor-*Likud* differences in political behavior.

Table 1
*The 'Apparatchik' and the 'Cincinnatus':
The Israeli Case*

(a) The Ratio of Apparatchiki to Cincinnatusi

	'Apparatchiki'		'Cincinnatusi'
Labor-led governments n = 77	1.1	:	1
<i>Likud</i> -led governments n = 20	1	:	2.5
<i>Likud</i> governments (including members who served in past governments) n = 26	1	:	2

(b) The Profiles of the Israeli 'Apparatchik' and the Israeli 'Cincinnatus'

	'Apparatchik'	'Cincinnatus'
Sex	Male	Male
Age when nominated	60 +	51-60
Place of birth	Eastern Europe	Israel
Residence	Cities & <i>kibbutzim</i>	Cities
Years in Israel	Prior to 1948	Born in Israel or immigrated to Israel prior to 1948
Education	High school Formal and informal academic degree	Formal academic degree
Occupation	Party politics Municipal politics Government bureaucracy	Army, Law, Business
Party Affiliation	Labor, Religious Parties	Liberal Parties, Democratic Movement for Change

Political Expertise

The Brzezinski and Huntington argument was that since modern society is bureaucratic, it needs professional bureaucratic politicians to run it. The successful political leader, according to those authors, is thus likely to be the political 'Apparatchik' who has extensive experience in the political bureaucracy while for the 'Cincinnatus' an entry into political leadership positions from non-political posts of high responsibility may be difficult.⁷ The

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 570, 572.

more specialized this non-political experience and the more individualistic his career, the more difficult it will be for the 'Cincinnatus' to adjust to rules of governmental politics, to teamwork on the ministerial (or any other) level, and to political homogeneity. On the other hand, however, from a government controlled by a 'majority' of politicians of this type one may expect more drastic policy changes, less conformity to the bureaucratic system and more individualistic orientations. While these general characteristics may certainly not be the dominant explanation of differences in the behavior of the Labor ministers versus the *Likud* ministers in Israel, they may contribute to such an explanation.

One may speculate that political leadership such as that of the Labor governments, which is composed primarily of 'Apparatchiki', will be more likely to offer expertise in government, will be more pragmatic and less individualistic than a 'Cincinnatusi' government, will pursue incremental policies and will share a general political ideology. The political leadership such as that of the *Likud*-led governments which is composed primarily of 'Cincinnatusi' will have more difficulties in adjusting to governmental bureaucratic rules,⁸ and will tend to have more political factions within its political framework than an 'Apparatchiki' government but will be more individualistic, less predictable and will pursue more drastic policy changes. Changes in the balance of 'Apparatchiki' to 'Cincinnatusi' in each government may have important impacts upon deviations from this model type of political behavior.

Appendix A

Variables Analyzed in the Study

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>
Age (when nominated)	40 or younger
	41-50
	51-60
	61 or older
Sex	Male
	Female
Country of Origin (aggregated)	Eastern Europe
	Western Europe
	Asia/Africa
	Israel
	North America/South Africa
Number of Years in Israel	Number of years

⁸ Political parties in Israel such as *Tami*, the Liberal and *Herut* factions within the *Likud* and others have, in recent years, included more and more bureaucratic politicians in their political circles.

*Variable**Category**(continued)*

Place of Residence	City <i>Kibbutz</i> <i>Moshav</i>
Education	Elementary High school University or equivalent
Occupation	Party bureaucracy Governmental bureaucracy Law Business Rabbis Soldiers Others
Years in Party or Governmental Bureaucracy	Number of Years
Party Affiliation	Labor <i>Likud</i> Religious Parties Others